An Essay
on
Measles

Respectfully submitted
To the Faculty of the
Homoeopathic Medical College
of
Pennsylvania
on the
Twenty fourth day of January
One thousand eight hundred and fifty three
by
J. F. Cooper
of
Pennsylvania

According to the regulations, of the Homeopathic Medical College of Pennsylvania, it is necessary, that every candidate for graduation, in the above named College, compose, and write a thesis on some medical subject, to be submitted to the Faculty of said college; for their approval, previous to his examination for the degree, of Dr of Medicine.

It could hardly be supposed, that one just entering the Medical arena, would come out on an entirely new subject, and treat it as would one that is a veteran in the field of medicine.

I therefore take a subject, that is somewhat familiar to me; thinking that I would be better able to write upon it, than upon a subject with which, I have but a theoretical acquaintance. I do not expect to produce much that is new; but intend making a general survey of the subject chosen.

Measles

The above named affection is usually classed with exanthematous skin diseases. They are mostly epidemic and most prevalent in the spring or winter season but may prevail at any season of the year. They attack principally children but attack also persons of all ages who have not been previously attacked by them.

They are generally mild and when not coupled with any other affection are scarcely ever fatal unless made so by maltreatment. But when coupled with Psora or Scropula or attacking persons in a cachectic condition they frequently assume a very formedable character and are very difficult to treat.

Measles may coexist with other acute affections as Scarlatina and a variety of pustular vesicular and bullous eruptions

Measles may also be complicated with cerebral affections, which may terminate in effusion of serum, into the ventricles of the brain.

They may be complicated with (pulmonary) affections, and with gastro intestinal affections.

They may be complicated with Croup, Opthalmia, Otitis, and Otorrhoea, or deafness, chronic inflammation of the glands, and lymphatics, and in the stage of convalescence with acute dropsy; the last occurring but seldom.

Measles may be transmitted by contact, or by infection, or by inoculation with water from the eye, or with fluid from the vesicles frequently found with the eruption.

It is from one to two weeks from the time of infection, till measles begin to develope themselves. They but seldom attack an individual more than once; but here and there an individual is attacked oftener.

Measles are distinguished from Scarletina by the absence of all catarrhal symptoms in the last named disease, and by a difference in the form, and appearance of the eruptions, also by a quick, small, and tolerably hard pulse, usually met with, in no other eruptive disease but Scarletina.

They are distinguished from Roseola, by a difference in the form and size of the spots composing the eruption. The spots of Roseola, are usually, much larger than the spots in Measles; being from the third of an inch, to an inch in diameter, and of a deep rose red colour.

The course of Measles, may be divided into three stages.

The first, or febrile stage, usually lasts from three to four days, and is characterised, by the following symptoms. Lassitude, general languor; and heaviness,

of the extremities creepings over the back and extremities usually followed by flushes of heat. There is also sensitiveness of the eyes a running of water from the eyes and an inflamed condition of the conjunctiva with puffiness of the lids. An excited condition of the schneiderian membrane of the nose causing sneezing and a discharge of water from the nose

There is in almost every case a troublesome cough at times dry and hacking but in very many cases attended with a rattling without being able to raise any thing hoarseness scraping and a feeling of rawness in the throat and if the patient is requested to point out the part of the throat that is sore the hand is in most cases placed on or just above the pomum adami. The soreness of the throat is in many cases very slight but in others very severe When severe the soreness generally extends along the

inferior border of the jaw, to near the external meatus of the ear, and if the patient is Scrofulous, the glands in the region just mentioned may become swollen, and inaurated.

In severe cases in this stage there is restlessness, difficulty of breathing, and at times moaning, just before the coming out of the eruption.

There is generally more or less nausea, want of appetite, moist, white coated tongue, and at times diarrhoea; but mostly in this stage constipation.

All the before mentioned symptoms are usually more violent as the eruptive stage approaches; particularly, if in a child, at, or during the period of first dentition; or in a full grown, or elderly person. There is in this stage also, an aching in the forehead, or temples. The fever generally increases till the eruption appears on the surface.

The second or eruptive stage, usually commences

between the third, and fourth day first on the face; then on the arms, back, and inferior extremities: consisting of spots more or less raised on the surface, one or two lines in diameter, and appearing usually in clusters of a semi lunated form.

At times here, and there, may be seen small vesicles, or pimples, with the eruption.

When the eruption is very thick a sensation of roughness is communicated to the hand in passing it over the surface. The redness of the spots composing the eruption, usually attains its greatest intensity, in about twenty four hours after the appearance of said spots.

The eruption generally begins to grow pale, and recede, in from thirty to thirty six hours, after it has reached its greatest degree of redness.

If the eruption is very thick, there is usually some swelling, and tumefaction of the parts most thickly covered by the eruption.

In this stage the cough is frequently severer, than in the previous stage, and bronchitis, or pneumonia, may be developed. As the desquamative stage approaches, the heat, and thirst are also more violent, generally, than they have previously been.

The third, or desquamative stage, commences after the sixth day, or between the sixth, and ninth day.

stage of desquamation

No dict word as desqu Mah

The spots on the face disappear first, then those on the rest of the body, in the order, in which they appeared, in the eruptive stage.

If the eruption has been but trifling, the scaling off, or desquamation, will be scarcely noticeable, but if the eruption has been profuse, and much desquamation follows, there is frequently a great deal of itching, of the parts from which the desquamation takes place.

A healthy sweat, critical urine, or diarrhoea, are

the most frequent terminations of this stage.
Bronchitis, or Pneumonia, is frequently developed in this stage, and the patient is as frequently exposed to danger from the development of said inflammatory conditions.
The cough, and frequently the heat, and thirst, maintain their violence during this stage, and if the patient is of a Scrofulous habit, the formation of tubercles may be induced, and thereby lay the foundation for Phthisis pulmonalis.
Wounds, abrasions, or contusions, on the surface not entirely healed, previous to taking the Measles, are apt to break out again, and become troublesome sores.
The spots on the surface of the body in Measles, appear to be owing, to a congested, and inflamed condition, of the papillary layer of the true skin, which destroys the integrity of the basement membrane, and consequently

causes exfoliation of the epidermis, over the parts marked by the eruption, if the eruption has been well marked or profuse.

The following medicines are very generally found indicated in the treatment of Measles.

Acon. Bryo. Bell. Cham. China. Dulc. Euph. Ipec. Puls. Phos. and Sulphur

Of these, Acon., and Puls., are used most: or in other words, are found indicated oftener than any of the others.

When the fever assumes an inflammatory type, with dry heat of the surface, dry barking cough, great thirst, giddiness, redness of the eyes, and intolerance of light, restlessness, and general weakness, and prostration, Acon is found to be indicated, and may be repeated often, and continued as long as the inflamanatory symptoms remain. It is mostly in the febrile stage, or stage of invasion, that Acon is indicated, but it may in various cases be indicated in any stage of the disease

It is said that a dose of Puls. administered in the first stage of Measles, will frequently arrest the course of the disease. I must acknowledge that I have never noticed such brilliant results from its use, after the disease had fairly set in.

Puls. may be indicated at almost any stage of the disease, and in almost every case during some one or other of the stages.

The greatest sphere for its action may be found in the female organism, particularly in those of a mild, yielding temper, and melancholy turn of mind.

The symptoms indicating it are great nausea, vomiting of the ingesta, or greenish, slimy, or bilious, and acid matter, constipation, or diarrhoea with whitish, watery, mixed, or bilious discharges. Violent cough, worse in the evening, with mucous sputa. Catarrhal inflammation of the mucous membrane of the mouth, and air passages.

Pinflammation of the ear, with shooting pains in the ear, worse by jar and starts.

Pt has been considered as almost specific in bringing out the eruption, and in its development after it has commenced to come out.

Pn the early stages of Measles it may be repeated tolerably often, also in any stage where indicated, if the symptoms are violent, but as soon as reaction has been established, it should not be repeated oftener than three times or in some cases not more than twice in the twenty four hours.

Pt has been regarded by many Homoeopathic Practitioners as almost specific in Otitis, and Otorrhoea, (following or accompanying Measles,

But lately some of the Homoeopathic practitioners of Philadelphia have recommended Dijit for pain in the ear. P have used it but once for such symptoms in Measles, and with marked success, but in that case there were

symptoms of Hydrothorax, and oedema of the left inferior extremity.

Bryo. is generally indicated by rheumatic pains in the limbs, aching of the head, dry spasmodic cough, with stitches or pains in the chest, when coughing, or taking a deep inspiration, soreness and inflamed condition of the eyes, constipation of the bowels, and tardy development of the eruption. Bryo is very efficacious in reproducing the eruption, after it has been suppressed.

Bell. is indicated by delirium, convulsions, twitching of the limbs, sleepiness without sleeping soundly, starting in sleep as if frightened, Heat and congestion to the head, violent aching in the frontal region, Sore throat, swelling of the parotid glands, with ptyalism, obstructed deglutition, and pain on swallowing, great thirst, requiring drink very often but taking but little at a time. Hoarseness, and dry fatiguing cough, worse at night. These with the rash

not coming out rapidly enough, are the principal indications for the above named medicine.

If there be much vomiting, considerable fever, short cough, hurried, laborious, or Phthisicky respiration, white coated tongue, and restlessness, before the eruption comes out, Ipecac would be the appropriate medicine.

Cuprum aceticum may become indicated by cerebral symptoms, growing out of, or caused by the repelling of the eruption.

Chamomilla may become indicated by retrocession of the eruption, by cold, the spots remaining on the skin are of a bluish colour, colicky pain in the bowels, nausea, and watery greenish stools.

Phosphorus may be indicated by the setting in of Pneumonia, or the development of Typhoid symptoms, such as foul thick coated tongue, black lips, relaxing of the bowels, hoarse dry cough, the spots become yellowish, brownish,

or petechial. Scratches, sores, or abraded surfaces, exhibit a great tendency to bleed.

Sulphur is very frequently indicated in the treatment of Measles, particularly if a Psoric dyscrasia has been aroused by the disease.

For diarrhoea during, or as a sequela of Measles, Arsen. Merc. Puls. Phos acid and Sulphur are among the most frequently indicated medicines. Arsenicum is indicated, if after the suppression of the eruption, there follows profuse discharges from the bowels of a watery, greenish, yellowish, brownish, or blackish, colour with great thirst, earth coloured, and hypocratic countenance.

Diarrhoea indicating Pulsatilla is characterised by evacuations of a whitish, greenish, or yellowish colour, occurring principally at night, with pain in the bowels, and smarting in the rectum.

The diarrhoea requiring Mercurius, is characterised by evacuations of a mucs sanguinolent sub-

stance, with pain in the bowels before stool, and tenesmus after stool.

For parotitis occurring with, or after Measles Rhus or Mercurius may be indicated.

Cough remaining as a sequela of Measles, mostly requires the administration of Acon. Bell. Bryo. Carbveg. Chamomilla. Coff. Drosera. Hyos. or Nux vom. as the symptoms require.

Otitis, and Otorrhoea, accompanying, or following Measles, is mostly removed by Carbveg. Puls. or Sulphur.

Croup occurring during or as a sequela of Measles, requires usually the exhibition of, Acon. Dros. Hepar. or Spongi.

Dropsy occurs but seldom after Measles, but when it does occur it may usually be treated with the following medicines, successfully. Arsenicum. Digitalis. or Helleborus.

Arsenicum will be found most efficacious in anasarca with ascites. I have found it most

efficacious when there was a constipated condition of the bowels. If given in ascites when the bowels are relaxed, the diarrhoea will generally cease, and the abdomen will increase in size by the accumulation of dropsical fluid in the cavity of the abdomen; but if given when the bowels are constipated, if otherwise indicated, the bowels are apt to become relaxed, and the morbid secretion is passed off per rectum.

Hellebore is generally indicated in dropsy of the abdomen or in Hydrocephalus, it is also at times, indicated in anasarca.

Digitalis is indicated in dropsies of the chest principally, but may be used with decided effect in ascites, and anasarca.